SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, this issue can simply be decided by sending it to the Standing Committee. That is a demand by the Members and we accept it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: So, this Bill will be referred to the Standing Committee.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: It should be sent to the Standing Committee.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Revitalization of North Eastern Council

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): Sir, the North Eastern Council (NEC) was established in 1972 through an Act of Parliament, the North Eastern Council Act, 1971, for securing the balanced development of the North Eastern Region and for inter-State coordination. In addition, the Council was entrusted with the task of reviewing the measures taken by the North Eastern States for the maintenance of security and public order in the region.

The NEC Act was amended in 2002. The amended NEC Act provides that NEC will function as the Regional Planning Body for the North-East and will formulate specific projects and schemes, which will benefit two or more States. In addition, the NEC will review the implementation of projects and schemes and recommend measures for effecting coordination in the matter of implementation of such projects and schemes. The NEC Act also provides that NEC will review the measures taken by the North Eastern States for the maintenance of security and public order and make necessary recommendations to the States.

Pursuant to a decision of the Union Cabinet in July 2003, to include *inter alia*, 'Revitalization of NEC' in the list of Priority/Thrust items for 2003-04, and a directive to the Ministry of DoNER to draw up a time-bound Action Plan for its implementation, an 11-Member Committee was constituted to recommend measures to operationalise the revised mandate of the NEC and to revitalize it.

The Committee held wide ranging consultations with Members of the North Eastern Council, senior State Government officials, intellectuals,

Civil Society Groups, Members of Parliament from the North-East and other stakeholders in the North Eastern Region including senior officers of various Ministries of Government of India and the Planning Commission. The Committee submitted its Report to the Government on 30th July 2004.

The Ministry of DoNER examined the Report of the Committee in consultation with concerned Ministries and Departments. The Government of India has, by and large, accepted the recommendations of the Committee. The recommendations relate to the organisational and functional restructuring of the NEC Secretariat, setting up of sectoral empowered committees, measures for regional planning for sustainable growth and development, financing of the regional plan from GBS in place of the NLCPR, measures for implementation of the regional plan, monitoring and evaluation of development projects, role of NEC in border trade and operationalising NEC's mandate relating to security and public order.

The Government has also accepted the recommendations relating to the nomination of the Minister, Development of North Eastern Region, as Chairman, NEC. Similarly, the recommendations relating to the nomination of three Members of NEC has also been accepted. It has also been decided to nominate Member (North-East), Planning Commission as one of the Members of NEC. The Nomination of the remaining two Members will be based on their experience of North Eastern Region and expertise in socio-economic planning. The nominated Members will be given the same status, terms and emoluments as are being enjoyed by the members of the Planning Commission.

The aforesaid decisions taken by the Government will go a long way in restructuring and strengthening NEC to enable it to play its role more effectively as a catalyst in the process of sustained economic growth and development of the North Eastern Region.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, do you want to ask? ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज (उत्तरांचल) : यह जो अभी statement आया है, *suo motu* statement by the Minister, राज्य सभा के नियमों के मुताबिक इस तरह के *suo motu* statement पर clarification की परम्परा है और आप जानते हैं कि वह clarification full-fledged debate में ही बदल जाती है। तब मैं आपसे एक प्रार्थना करूंगी कि आप इसकी clarification आज defer कर दें, क्योंकि यह बहुत लम्बा चौड़ा statement है और इसमें से बहुत ही गंभीर प्रश्न उभर रहे हैं, जो हम मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहेंगे। तो चेयरमैन साहब

जब भी इसके लिए समय तय करें, इसमें clarifications लगा दें तब हम इसके ऊपर प्रश्न पूछेंगे। अभी आप दूसरी चर्चा शुरू करवा दें।

उपसभापति : clarification के लिए बाद में समय तय करेंगे ।

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Internal security situation in the Country

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, it transpired from what Mr. Sanjay Nirupam and others were saying that the circumstances in which we were taking up this issue today was, by allusion, a reflection on the inability of the Government to keep up with Legislative Business. But in my view it is actually a symptom of the times in which we live, that an issue like internal security really comes up as a filler for the afternoon. And I will go through this. It is easy on such a matter to make a partisan speech about what great work was being done by the NDA and what has happened since then. I am not going to do that because the issue is too grave for us to boast about each other's doings in this whole matter and I would, therefore, also plead, please do not dismiss (from every other side) what I have to say by the simple question: But what did you do when you were in Government? It's too grave for that kind of a response and I will be urging several things for the hon. Home Minister to consider because it would be very easy for me to give an extensive account of the concerted steps which were being taken and which many of us apprehended, sort of went in vain in the last few months. But I will not do that, Sir. And I will make the brief point that I want to put forth which I should, of course, do in some detail. It is that the situation was set out very well in the two of the four Task Forces that were set up in the wake of the Kargil War. The situation regarding internal security was examined by the Task Force on Internal Security. It had some of our most experienced civil servants on it, some of our most experienced intelligence officers and security personnel on it. Similarly, the Task Force on Border Management. These were the two Task Forces that dealt with the issues which I will go into in some detail. Sir, my point is that the situation is well described there. They have given a long list of things that should be done and I would urge that since they reported, the situation has deteriorated to an alarming extent and therefore the urgency with which those steps should be taken has been compounded by events in the last few months. This is the main point which I want to urge for the Home Minister's consideration and I will deal with why this is so. Sir, the